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FOREIGN DEPARTMENT

IN CHARGE OF

LAVINIA L. DOCK



THE SELECT COMMITTEE'S REPORT

THE joy and satisfaction of all those who have worked for legal status may be imagined when we hear that the Select Committee has reported favorably to Parliament. The full report, which appeared in the *British Journal of Nursing* of August 5, is too long to give in full, but the main point is that the committee "are agreed that it is desirable that a register of nurses should be kept by a Central Body appointed by the State, and that, while it is not desirable to prohibit unregistered persons from nursing for gain, no person should be entitled to assume the designation of 'Registered Nurse' whose name is not upon the register."

It is recommended that the Central Body should be set up by act of Parliament, and that its constitution should be defined in the act; that the Central Body should consist of matrons, nurses, representatives of the medical profession, training-schools, and the public; that it should not be too large—eleven suggested as a convenient number, or not more than fifteen; that the Central Body shall decide what constitutes a recognized training-school, and that the minimum period of training be left to its discretion; that the Central Body shall inspect, but that examinations shall be left to the schools; that there should be an annual publication of the register.

The long struggle over the "two standards" of nurse ends in a clause, evidently a compromise, which says that it should be the duty of the Central Body to advise the Privy Council four years or so after the passing of any act for registration as to whether it would be advisable to institute a separate register for nurses of a lower standard. Remembering the persistency with which a double standard was urged in some quarters, this compromise seems very canny and clever.

The report also recommends the registering of private hospitals or nursing homes under county or borough authorities. This is a reform which America needs to imitate.

The Select Committee had some more strong testimony towards the close, notably that of Lady Helen Munro Fergusson, who has been from the beginning a most valuable and effective ally, and who has done more for the cause than any other laywoman except Miss Louisa Stevenson. She writes and speaks with ability and with unfailing intelligence and complete understanding of the subject. Moreover, her support of the

nurses' cause is quite free from the touch of patronage which spoils many well-meant lay efforts. An excellent point that she made was that it was more to the public interest to have all training-schools conform to a definite standard than to have a few superlative institutions. Physicians again came out strong, advocating compulsory registration rather than the present muddle, and a member of the Parish Council of Glasgow said the same thing. Sir Henry Burdett wound up the proceedings with a long tale, in which, sad to say, with our usual density we could make out no meaning whatever.

The Board of Trade scheme has been shelved,—in other words, “put aside until bills before Parliament have been disposed of,”—and the benevolent bankers must feel secretly relieved.

THE REVOLUTION IN FRENCH HOSPITALS

(Concluded from page 698)

WHILE the French authorities were struggling unsuccessfully with their problem of training nurses, the women so long and so sorely needed began contributing their share by preparing object-lessons for the eyes of the hospital directors and physicians. Dr. Anna Hamilton, who is half English and half French, having studied medicine, first gained distinction by a thesis, in which she dealt in so striking and impressive a way with the subject of hospital nursing that her hearers, who at first had expected to pooh! pooh! so unworthy a theme, accorded her spontaneous admiration and recognition for having opened their eyes to a subject to which they had never before given a thought.

For more than ten years Dr. Hamilton has been in charge of the Protestant hospital at Bordeaux, where she has introduced English methods of training and has evolved an admirable training-school, described in a former number of the JOURNAL in an illustrated article. I did not get to Bordeaux, which I regret, for I would much like to have seen this school, the first one in France to have a home for the nurses, thoroughly graded practical work with teaching, a definite course, and with only educated gentlewomen as pupils. The only suggestion of the smoke and din of earlier battles is shown in this school taking only “Protestant” pupils—at least, this was for a time the case. I do not know positively that this stipulation still exists. Besides her admirable school, which has steadily presented an object-lesson and which has trained women who are now in their turn beginning to go out to do reform work in other hospitals, Dr. Hamilton has been a vigorous and stirring writer on nursing education and systems. In collaboration with

Dr. Felix Regnault she has written an admirable history of nursing, and she has written reports, articles, and criticisms in which the academic methods of the French authorities in their plans for teaching nurses have been truly slashed and incised with the unerring and unsparing knife of the surgeon. One must think that they have sometimes squirmed under the process, but no doubt it has done them good. Well for her that she is a physician and not a nurse! It gives her the right to say what she pleases.

Then in Paris another group of women have established a second object-lesson right under the eyes of the "Assistance publique" of Paris, and they have taken care that the "Assistance publique" in the person of its chief directors should come to see it, and they have done so with results that cannot help but be most beneficial to the great city hospitals of Paris. This little model of a training-school—truly at present a tiny plant—I went to see, and it seemed to me one of the sweetest and most hopeful foundations possible to think of—like an oasis in the desert after traversing the great, dreary barracks of public hospitals. It is situated in the Rue Amyot and is under the presidency of Madame Alphen-Salvador, who was present at the Berlin Congress, and who typifies the best spirit of modern liberal humanitarianism without a shade of personal or religious prejudice. As a laywoman, debarred from criticism of professional methods, she has adopted the weapons of persuasion and demonstration only. The Training-School, in which the pupils live, is a charming spot, most simple and unpretentious, but refined and secluded, with a large study and class-room and an atmosphere of culture. More charming young women I have never seen. There is, indeed, in the "French grace" something peculiarly French and indescribable. The two little private hospitals where the pupils work are very tiny, but they will grow, and the plans and outlook of the founders are large and ample. It was well for this school to begin, if even it had begun with nothing, for the ideal and the stimulus are there. All that it wants is to grow a little larger and stronger (it is still very young) and affiliate with some one or two of the big hospitals. This would make a perfect whole. At present the big Paris hospitals have no nurses' homes or fitting quarters, and are unable to attract refined and educated young women. The school has the home and the garden and the study and the personalities who are able to attract the most desirable type of young womanhood.

Another thing that is working favorably for the French hospitals is the increased friendliness of relations with England. One of Dr. Hamilton's best pupils, Miss Elston, had her training at the London hospital and then went back, and has now been placed in full charge

of the nursing in the Civil Hospital at Tondou, a hospital of one hundred and twenty beds. She has established a training-school there. Then some little time ago a deputation of French physicians went to London to inspect the hospitals, and they seem to have been more impressed with the nursing than anything else. Well may they have been so, indeed, and to go from the wards of Paris to those of London is to get the most striking contrast in the world, for of all big hospitals those of Paris are the dreariest, barest, and most unhomelike, and those of London the most cheerful, homelike, cosy, and comfortable. Then, "no hospital smell." The French doctors went home and wrote glowing eulogies of the English nurses, and said, plainly, "Why cannot we have the same kind?"

Within the past year Miss Edla Wortabel, an English nurse, has been called to Bordeaux and Paris to direct and advise in reorganizing movements. Her descriptions of the now changing conditions are rich and racy and should be read by everyone interested in nursing history. They are published in the *British Journal*, and if our space allows, some parts of them at least may be reproduced here.

(The End.)

THE DUTCH NURSING JOURNALS

THE language of Holland having responded to our overtures and proving not so very impossible, we are now able to get interesting glimpses of Dutch nursing affairs through the two nursing journals, *Maandblad* and *Nosokomos*.

The former is the organ of the older and more conservative association, composed of nurses, physicians, and the governing boards of hospitals, which is now trying to work out a plan for voluntary registration. This association, called the Dutch Nursing Association, contains many well-known and honored names, such as Miss La Bastide Baarslag, Miss Reynvaan, Miss Kruijsse, etc. *Maandblad* gives all of the proceedings of this society, and it must be admitted that the doctors seem to do the big share of the work. Thus the committee appointed to report on educational standards and requirements for registration consisted of four physicians and one nurse, and a committee appointed on ways and means for a pension fund for nurses consisted of three physicians. *Maandblad* recently had an illustrated article describing the New York Lying-In Hospital, and it has also given a summary of the New York Nurses' Examining Board with a very cordial word of approbation.

Nosokomos represents a younger and more radical society with a

very long name. It has given in a recent number the report of the International Council of Nurses in full, including Miss Nutting's and Miss Palmer's papers. I am sure they never expected to see themselves in *Hollandisch*!

There are also some physicians included in this society, but they appear to be more modern in their ideas. One, a woman, Dr. Aletta Jacobs, is a well-known educational reformer, prominent in Women's Councils. Dr. Aletrino, the editor-in-chief, is a crusader, and rides in exhilarating fashion against some of the older customs. One must agree with him in principle and acknowledge that all he says may be true, but feel that he perhaps says it too cuttingly and may thereby lose friends unnecessarily. In fighting for principles one must make some enemies, but it should always be remembered that the fewer enemies and more friends the better for the principles and for their ultimate acceptance. He is a firm believer in a standard of refinement and education for admission to nursing and declares that some Dutch hospitals do not want educated women but only housemaids, and that if they happen to get women of a higher grade they give them only the training of housemaids. He further declares that the present defects in nursing arise from the fact that it is entirely taught by physicians who know how to teach nurses to handle a case but not how to train them to *nurse* (*i.e.*, to solace, cheer, and comfort) the *patient*. He cites cases where the wards, rather than the sick persons, are nursed, and where the patients are wakened at five, four, three, and even in one instance at two o'clock A.M., so that the whole ward work should be done by nine A.M. rounds. This sounds incredible, but has also been known in other countries than Holland. It arises from a sort of extreme militarism as to doctors' rounds, and German nurses have told me how they have often, when on day duty, gotten up at four A.M., though their regular hour for rising was five or five-thirty, in order to hurry to their wards and get all sorts of things done before early rounds.

The teaching question is also interestingly discussed in *Maandblad* by Dr. Bylsma. He seems to have the real teaching spirit, and his ideas on education are excellent, though his conclusion is most astonishing. He first shows that busy medical staffs have not the time needed to thoroughly instruct the nurses, therefore it becomes with them a perfunctory duty. It should be a foremost responsibility of some one person to take the nurses in small groups and teach them systematically. This is so good that we thought he was going to say this person should be a nurse-teacher. No, indeed. He goes on to argue that matrons themselves (superintendents of training-schools) are not competent to teach, though they may be good managers, and concludes that the director of

the hospital is the proper person! We commend this idea to our society of hospital superintendents.

The nurses of Holland in managing their directories for private duty seem to have exactly the same trials as our directory managers at home.

ITEM

MISS AMY HUGHES has been appointed to the important and distinguished position of head of the Queen's Nurses. We offer her the congratulations of all her American friends.

LANCIANI says that Julius Cæsar was the first statesman to dignify the study of hygiene by recognizing its teachers as professors of the liberal arts, with the rights of citizenship. He says, further, that Nero organized the medical service of Rome by naming a superintendent of court physicians. Schools of medicine were opened and the students organized themselves into an incorporation.

Celsus Aurelianus, he writes, in the third century reproached his colleagues for keeping their patients in confinement as injurious to the progress of medical science. Later, when the professors went to visit patients, all the students went along.

Lanciani also tells us that Antoninus Pius organized the first service of public assistance under the influence of Christian feeling, and that medical chiefs were established in every inhabited centre. They were elected by the town councils and approved by the heads of families.

Under this service a set of rules was adopted for the large cities, and assistance to the poor was compulsory and gratuitous.

